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CENTRAL INTELLIGENCE AGENCY

REPORT

INFORMATION REPORT

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INFORMATION REPORT

COUNTRY East Germany

DATE DISTR 5 February 1955

SUBJECT Status of Slavic Linguistics at
East German Universities

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1. GDR universities have a great shortage of teachers of Slavic languages. Efforts are being made to obtain suitable professors from West Germany. The study of Slavic languages in GDR universities is increasing the students are given special prizes for 100 to 200 marks per year to pay for their books. Lectures in Slavic languages have been made rather easy because students of Slavic languages are urgently needed. Institutes of Slavic languages are well equipped and meet all requirements of students of Slavic languages. 25X1
2. Slavic philologists in the East look down with some contempt upon the status of Slavic philologists in the West. The teaching of Slavic languages is neglected in the West and thus its scientific standing is far inferior to the level of the Slavic studies in the East. This inferior position of Slavic philologists in the West is attributed to political bias.
3. It is intended to establish chairs of Slavic languages in East Berlin and four in the provinces including the former language and culture. It will be difficult, however, to find suitable candidates for these chairs because Russian professors cannot be obtained. Professors of Slavic languages who went from East Germany to West Germany will not be recalled on principle. It is planned to move the Slavistische Zentralinstitut (Central Institute for Slavic Languages) from Greifswald to East Berlin in the near future. Manuals and handbooks for the study of Slavic languages are to be written at this institute. The publication of a periodical for Slavic languages which is to be edited by Professors Bielefeldt and Liewehr is to be prepared.
4. The kind of reception given by the GDR authorities to a Western professor for Slavic languages who accepts a teaching position at a GDR university is illustrated by the case of an Austrian philologist. The Austrian professor, upon his arrival at an East Berlin aerodrome, was welcomed by a representative of the GDR Ministry of Universities. He was accommodated in one of the best hotels of the city and was treated as a guest of the Government. The Austrian professor visited

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one of his colleagues who lives on the outskirts of the city. The Austrian scientist was deeply impressed by the living standard of the East Berlin professor of Slavic languages. The Berlin professor had been given a large villa situated in a fine park and had a deluxe car at his disposal. His two daughters told the Viennese professor that they far preferred life in East Berlin to life in West Berlin. On the following morning, the Austrian professor was accompanied to his first lecture by a high-ranking representative of the Ministry of Education. After his lecture, a banquet was given in his honor. This procedure was repeated during the three days of his stay in East Berlin. A passenger car was also placed at the disposal of the Austrian professor. On all occasions, the Austrian philologist was honored and treated with the greatest courtesy and publicity. He was celebrated as a philologist of international standing. After staying in Berlin for three days, the Austrian professor was accompanied by a representative of the Ministry to the University city where he had accepted a chair. He was welcomed there with the greatest honors by the Dean of the University, his Deputy, and also the burgomaster of the city, who praised the professor's courage in coming to the "divided East". The professor was promised every possible help and the fulfillment of all his wishes. The Austrian professor was given a monthly basic salary of 3,000 Eastmarks in addition to special bonuses which he will receive as director of his institute. The railroad journey to and from Berlin were made in reserved first-class compartments.

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1. GDR universities have a great shortage of teachers of Slavic languages. Efforts are being made to obtain suitable professors from West Germany. The study of Slavic languages at GDR universities is free and the students are given a special bonus of from 200 to 500 eastmarks per year to pay for their books. Examinations in Slavic languages have been made rather easy because students of Slavic languages are so urgently needed. Institutes of Slavic languages are well equipped and meet all requirements for successful scientific work.
2. Slavic philologists in the East look down with some contempt upon the status of Slavic philology in the West. They believe that the teaching of Slavic languages is neglected in the West and that its scientific standing is far inferior to the level of the Slavic studies in the East. This inferior position of Slavic philologists in the West is attributed to political bias.
3. It is intended to establish eight chairs for Slavic languages in East Berlin and four in Greifswald, including one for Czech language and culture. It will be difficult to find suitable candidates for these chairs because few are being obtained. Professors of Slavic languages who have been expelled to West Germany will not be recalled on principle. It is planned to move the "Slawistische Zentralinstitut" (Central Institute for Slavic Languages) from Greifswald to East Berlin in the near future. Manuals and handbooks for the study of Slavic languages are to be written at this institute. The publication of a periodical for Slavic languages which is to be edited by Professors Bielefeldt and Liewehr is to be prepared.
4. The kind of reception given by the GDR authorities to a Western professor for Slavic languages who accepts a teaching position at a GDR university is illustrated by the case of an Austrian philologist. The Austrian professor, upon his arrival at an East Berlin aerodrome, was met by a delegation of GDR officials and university representatives. He was taken to a hotel and then to the university where he was introduced to his colleagues.

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